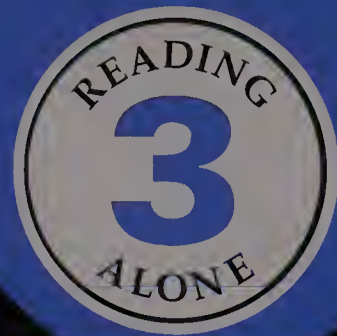


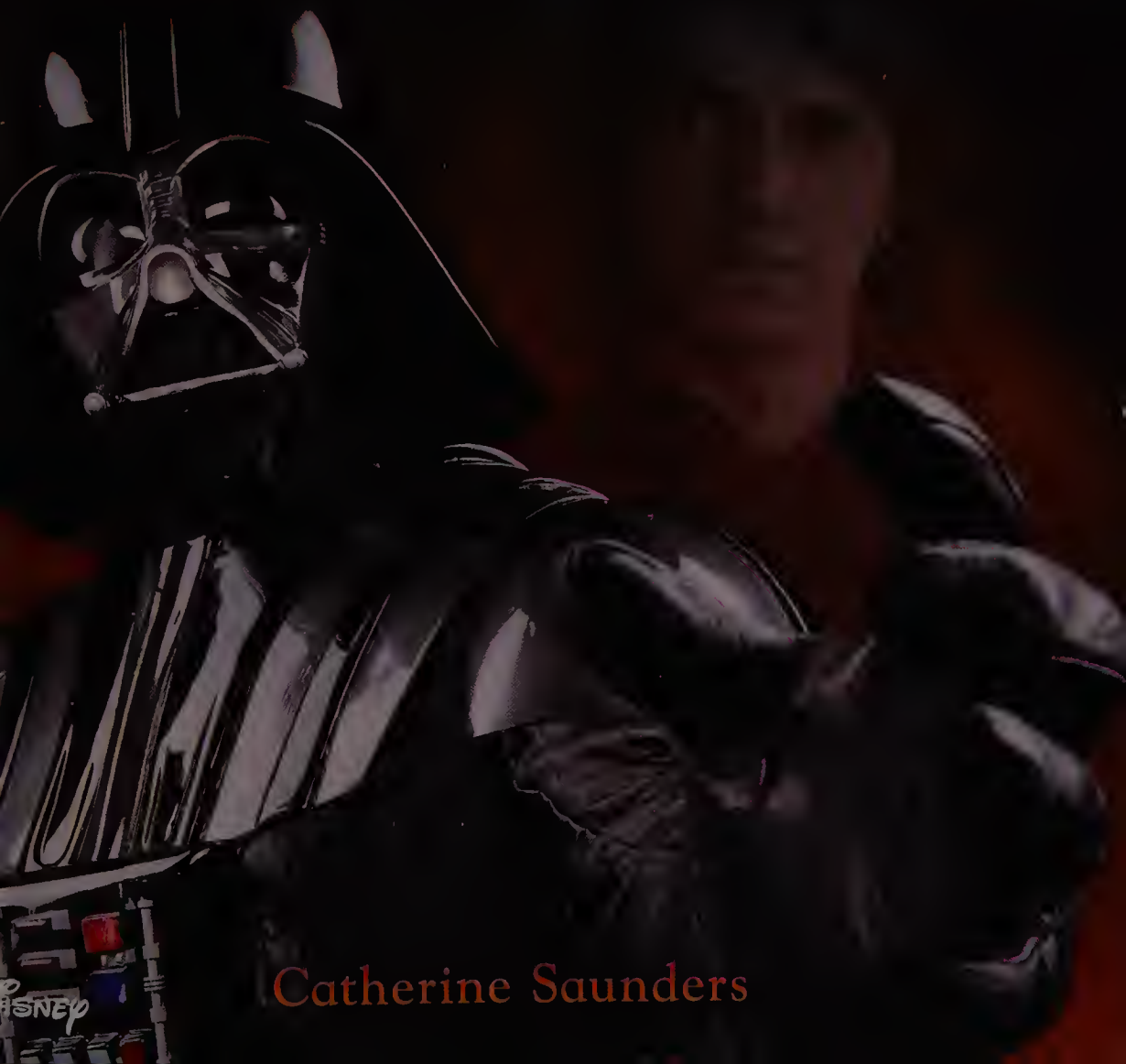


READERS



STAR WARS®

THE STORY OF DARTH VADER



Disney

Catherine Saunders

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DK READERS is a compelling program for beginning readers, designed in conjunction with leading literacy experts, including Dr. Linda Gambrell, Professor of Education at Clemson University. Dr. Gambrell has served as President of the national Reading Conference, the College Reading Association, and the International Reading Association.

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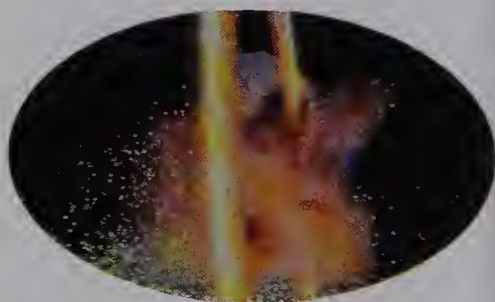
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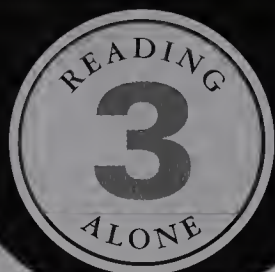
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READERS



STAR WARS

THE STORY OF DARTH VADER



Written by Catherine Saunders



The Story of Darth Vader

Take a look at Darth Vader—if you dare! He is a very dangerous man with many terrifying powers. Darth Vader is a ruthless Sith Lord who helps rule the galaxy for the evil Emperor Palpatine.

But Darth Vader was not always the masked Sith you see now. Once he was a talented Jedi Knight named Anakin Skywalker. Read on and uncover the story of how a promising young Jedi turned to the dark side of the Force.

Emperor Palpatine

From the first moment he met Anakin Skywalker, Palpatine knew that he could be the perfect apprentice.

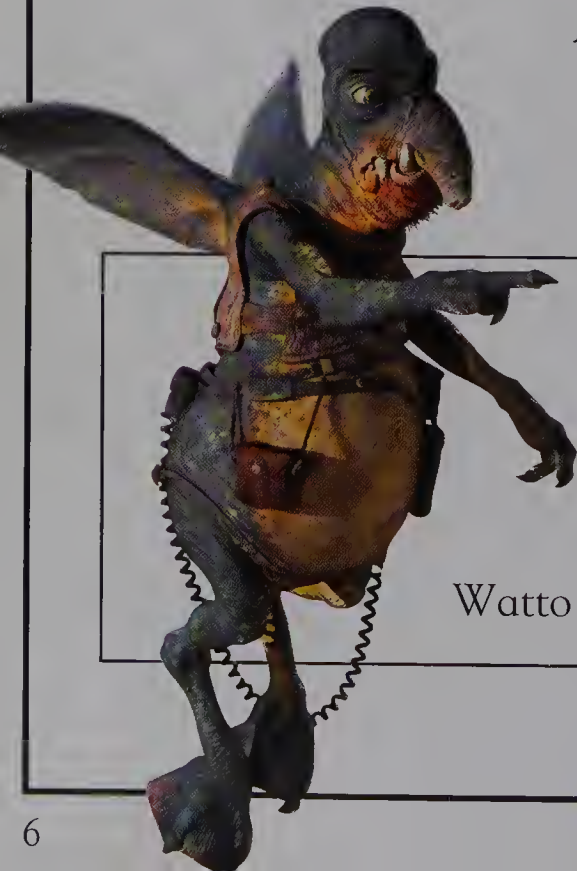


Young Anakin Skywalker

Anakin Skywalker grew up a slave on the desert planet Tatooine. His mother Shmi could not explain how Anakin came to be born—he had no father.

Anakin was a gentle child and he loved his mother very much. From a young age he was skilled at making and fixing mechanical things. When he was nine years old he built a droid named C-3P0 to help his mother. However,

Anakin was impulsive and liked to take risks.



Slave owner

Anakin and Shmi were owned by a junk dealer named Watto and had to do whatever he told them.

Watto made them work very hard.



A Special Calling

When Jedi Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi landed on Tatooine to repair their damaged ship, they met Anakin Skywalker. Qui-Gon realized the young slave had the potential to be a great Jedi.



Qui-Gon checked Anakin's blood to see if he had Force powers. He certainly did!





When Anakin offered to enter a dangerous Podrace, Qui-Gon seized the opportunity to win the parts he needed for his ship and Anakin's freedom. The Jedi was sure that Anakin's Force powers would help him to win the race. He was right. Freed from slavery, Anakin was able to leave Tatooine with the Jedi, but first he had to say goodbye to his mother.



Anakin was happy to be embarking on a new adventure, but he missed his mother very much.

A New Life Begins

After leaving Tatooine, Qui-Gon asked the Jedi Council to let Anakin become his apprentice, but it refused. The Council thought that Anakin was already too old, and some wise members also sensed danger in Anakin's future.

So, when Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan went on a special mission, Anakin went too.



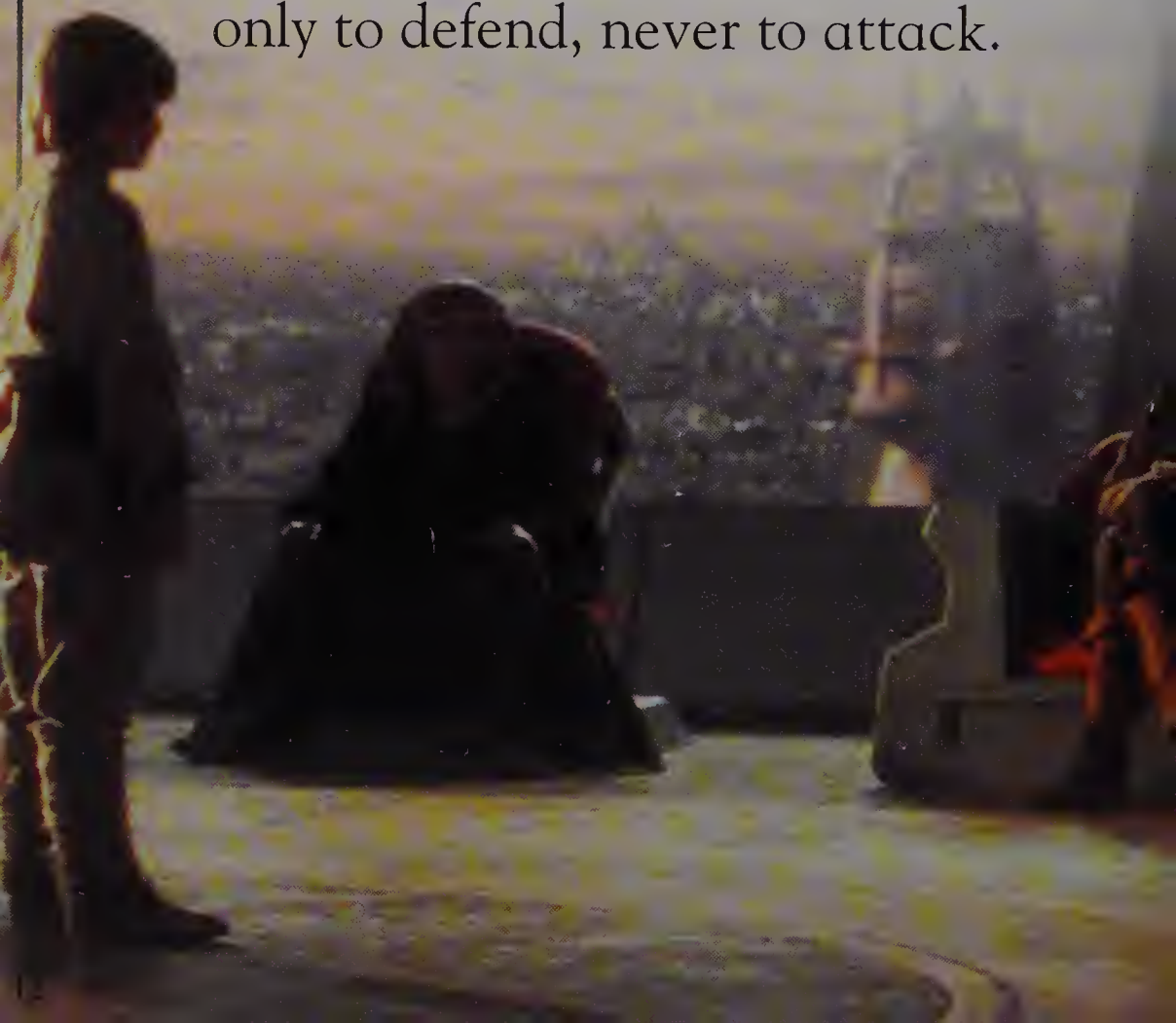
Padmé Amidala
Queen Padmé Amidala of Naboo was only a few years older than Anakin and the young boy developed strong feelings for her.

Anakin and the Jedi liberated the planet Naboo from the Trade Federation invasion. When Anakin piloted a starfighter and destroyed the Trade Federation's Droid Control Ship, the Jedi Council changed its mind. Although Qui-Gon had been killed by a Sith, Obi-Wan promised to train Anakin instead.



Jedi Training

Anakin Skywalker returned to the Jedi Temple on the capital planet Coruscant to begin his training. He was taught how to use and control his incredible Force powers. Anakin was also instructed in the ways of the Jedi Knights. Jedi must be calm and not governed by emotions. They are peace-loving and use their skills only to defend, never to attack.



As Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi's Padawan learner or apprentice, Anakin came to view Obi-Wan as the closest thing he had to a father figure.



The Force

The energy known as the Force is everywhere. Jedi learn to use the light side of the Force for good, while their enemies, the Sith, use the dark side for greed and power.





Increasing Frustration

Anakin loved and respected Obi-Wan, but often felt frustrated by him. Anakin was confident in his Jedi abilities, and felt that Obi-Wan was holding him back. He was tired of being just a Padawan.

Obi-Wan knew that Anakin had the potential to be a powerful Jedi Knight.



But he also believed that Anakin had not yet mastered his emotions, as a Jedi should. Obi-Wan was proved right when Anakin was reunited with Padmé Amidala after ten years. The feelings that Anakin had felt for her as a boy had not gone away. Soon he would no longer be able to control them.

Powerful Friend

The galaxy was formed as a Republic, which meant that it was ruled by a Senate in which all the planets had representatives. As his frustration grew, Anakin found himself turning to Chancellor Palpatine, leader of the Republic. Palpatine seemed to understand exactly how Anakin felt. He was a good listener. Anakin believed that Palpatine was on his side, unlike Obi-Wan.



Sith Lord

Palpatine was secretly a Sith Lord, Darth Sidious. He served as Supreme Chancellor of the Republic—but he had plans to destroy it.



Anakin did not realize that Palpatine was secretly trying to destroy the Republic and seize power for himself.





Unstoppable Feelings

Palpatine's sinister influence increased Anakin's frustration with Obi-Wan and the Jedi Order and left him feeling very confused. When he was chosen to escort Padmé back to Naboo, he finally lost the battle to control his feelings for her.



Padmé was now a Senator and had a duty to the Republic, but she too could not prevent herself from falling in love with Anakin. They were secretly married on Naboo. Jedi were not supposed to get emotionally attached to others. Anakin had broken the rules, but he didn't care.

Turning to the Dark Side

Anakin had not forgotten his mother Shmi, whom he had left on Tatooine. He began to have terrible nightmares about her, so he went to find her.

Out of Control

As he knelt by Shmi's grave, Anakin was angry that he could not save her. He had ignored the Jedi teachings and given into his anger.



Anakin went back to Tatooine. There he discovered that Shmi had married a farmer named Cliegg Lars, who had freed her from slavery. Anakin also learned that his mother had been kidnapped by Sand People. He went in search of her but he was too late and she died in his arms. Overcome with grief and anger, Anakin took revenge on the Sand People.





Jedi Hero

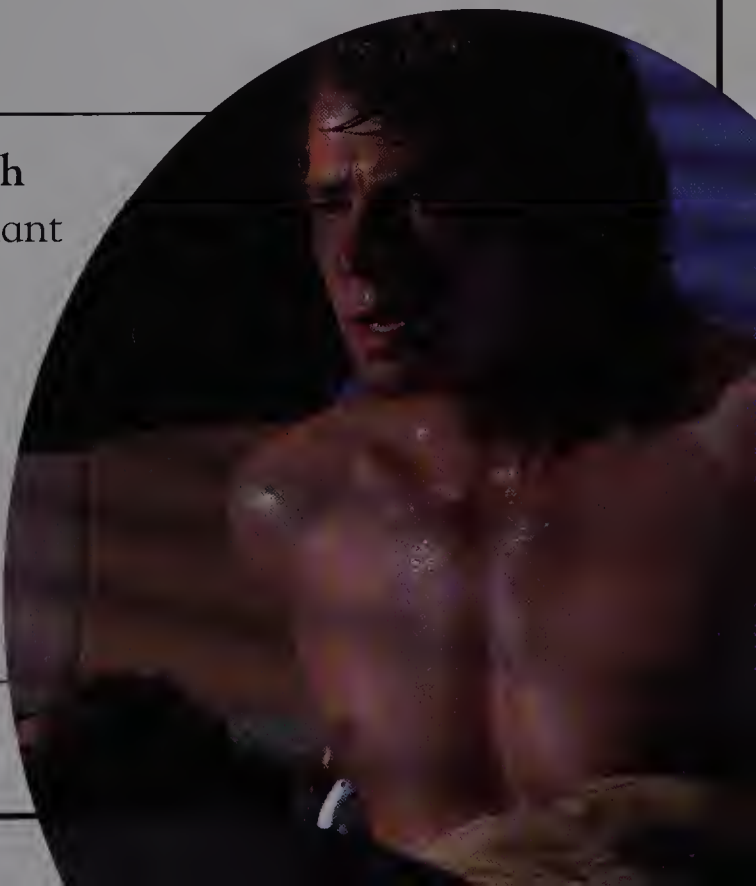
Although he was increasingly ruled by his emotions, Anakin had not yet fully turned to the dark side. When the Republic was forced into the Clone Wars, Anakin fought bravely with the Jedi.

The Clone Wars lasted for many years and Anakin and Obi-Wan became famous heroes. Anakin felt truly alive in the heat of the battle and his powers became even stronger.

However, Anakin still felt that he was being held back by the Jedi and that only Palpatine was encouraging his talents. Anakin felt that maybe the Jedi teachings were not right and that greater power lay elsewhere.

The Shadow of Death

Padmé became pregnant and Anakin began to have nightmares about her death. He had been unable to save his mother, so he was determined to save Padmé.



The Dark Side Wins

Towards the end of the Clone Wars, Palpatine was kidnapped. Anakin and Obi-Wan went to his aid, but it was a trap. Sith Lord Count Dooku was waiting for them. He knocked out Obi-Wan and began to fight Anakin. Palpatine urged Anakin to kill Dooku and Anakin gave in.



A short time later Anakin chose Palpatine over the Jedi and his transition to the dark side was complete. He knelt before Palpatine—his new Sith Master.

On Palpatine's orders, Anakin led an attack on the Jedi Temple.



The End of Anakin

Anakin turned his back on the Jedi and adopted the Sith name Darth Vader. On Palpatine's orders he set out to destroy his former friends and comrades. Darth Vader also became convinced that Padmé and Obi-Wan were plotting against him. He nearly killed his wife and then faced Obi-Wan in an intense lightsaber battle.





Although Darth Vader was driven by anger and the power of the dark side, Obi-Wan won the terrible fight. Vader suffered horrific injuries and burns.




Anakin the Sith

When he turned to the dark side, Anakin's eyes turned yellow like all the Sith. He could no longer hide his alliance with evil.

Rebuilding Darth Vader

Although Darth Vader's body seemed beyond repair, Palpatine refused to give up on his evil apprentice. He took Vader's body to a secret medical facility where it was rebuilt using cyber-technology. Vader needed special breathing equipment and life support systems just to stay alive.

Behind the black armor and a black helmet, it seemed that no part of the human Anakin Skywalker was left. Darth Vader had given himself completely to the ways of the dark side.



Palpatine and his clone troopers recovered Darth Vader's broken body from the volcano planet Mustafar.



Padmé's Secret

With her husband lost to the dark side, a heartbroken Padmé gave birth to twins, whom she named Luke and Leia. Loyal Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi was by her side, but Padmé had no will to live without Anakin.





Reunited

At first Luke and Leia had no idea that they were twins, but they felt a special connection. When they discovered the truth, they were happy and not completely surprised.

Jedi Master Yoda decided to keep the children a secret from their father. Obi-Wan took Luke to Tatooine to live with Shmi Skywalker's stepson Owen Lars and his wife Beru. Luke's life on the desert planet was hard and lonely. Leia, was taken to the planet Alderaan. She was adopted by Obi-Wan's friend Bail Organa and brought up a princess. Neither twin knew that the other existed. They did not suspect that their father was the feared Sith Lord Vader.



The Rise of Darth Vader

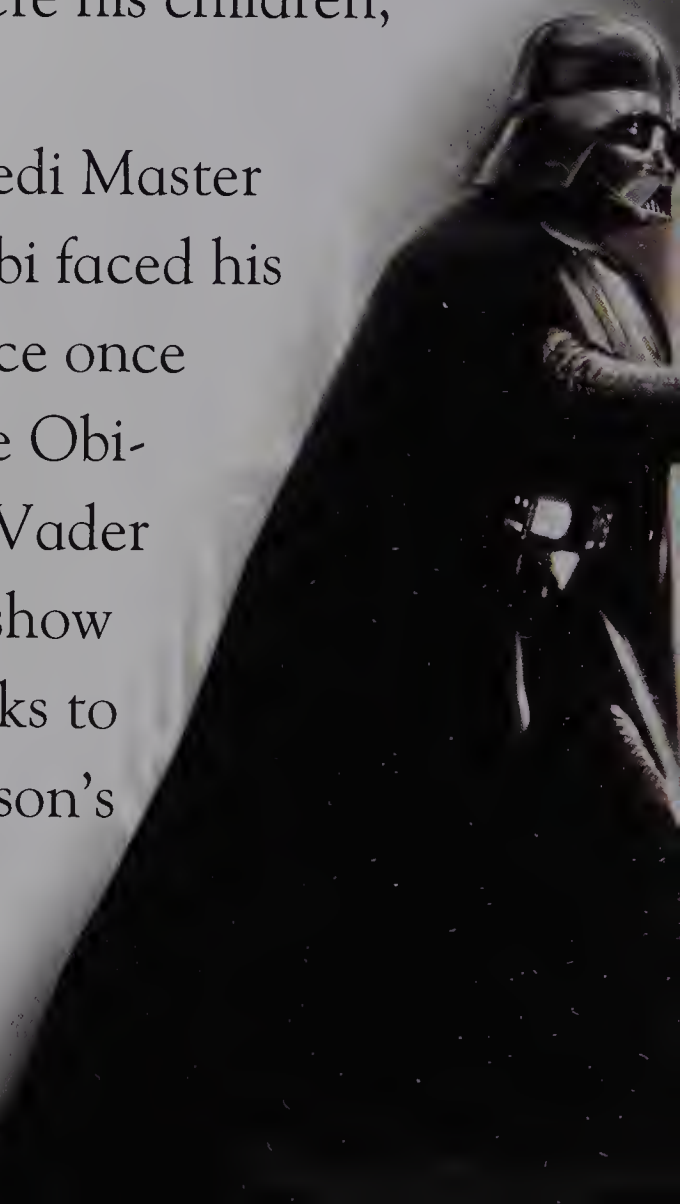
The Republic had been destroyed and the evil Palpatine ruled the galaxy as Emperor, with Vader by his side. The Sith Lords would let nothing and no one stand in their way. Darth Vader's terrifying appearance, deep voice, and loud artificial breathing struck fear into the hearts of his enemies and allies alike. Even his own generals could not escape Vader's wrath and, as time went by, the Sith's powers grew even stronger.

Anakin Skywalker had been a brave pilot and highly skilled with a lightsaber, but the dark side of the Force continued to corrupt the mind of Darth Vader. He would strangle people without even touching them and he could read the thoughts and feelings of others.

Civil War

Although the Sith had destroyed the Republic and most of the Jedi, a small group of Rebels bravely opposed the Empire. Known as the Rebel Alliance, they were based on the planet Yavin 4. Little did Darth Vader know that two of the Rebels were his children, Luke and Leia.

The famous Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi faced his former apprentice once again. This time Obi-Wan let Darth Vader win in order to show Luke that, thanks to the Force, a person's spirit continues after death.





Torture

When Darth Vader captured the Rebel Princess Leia, he tortured her to learn the Rebels' secrets. He had no idea that she was his own daughter.





Rebel Victory

The Emperor decided to build a superweapon known as a Death Star. It was the size of a small moon and had the power to blow up entire planets. However, the Rebels managed to obtain the plans for the weapon and learned that it had a fatal flaw.



One exhaust port was unprotected and if a pilot fired torpedoes into its shaft, a chain reaction of explosions would destroy the whole Death Star. The Rebels sent a squadron of star fighters and their best pilot, Luke Skywalker, had one chance to destroy the Death Star. He did not miss.



Imperial Fleet

The Rebel Alliance had only a small number of ships which already bore the scars of previous battles, but the Empire had a massive fleet of starships. The largest and most powerful Imperial vessels were known as Super Star Destroyers. Powered by thirteen engines, the Super Star Destroyers were arrow shaped and loaded with deadly weapons.



Darth Vader's ship *Executor* was the most powerful Super Star Destroyer. Vader commanded the fleet, but the Emperor gave his orders via hologram.



Executor

Vader's magnificent ship led the Imperial fleet into many great battles. It was eventually destroyed by the Rebels.

Vader's Revenge

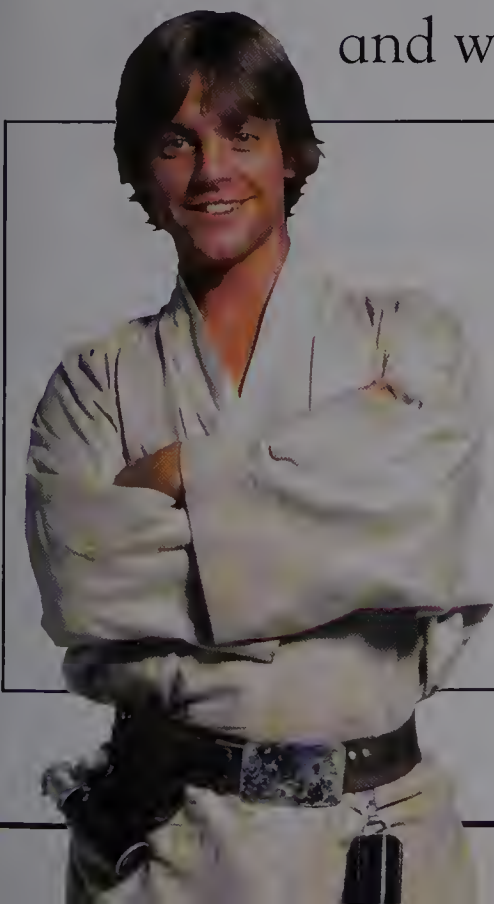
When the Rebels blew up the first Death Star, it made Darth Vader and the Emperor extremely angry. They began building a new Death Star and Darth Vader set out to find and destroy the Rebels responsible. Vader sent probe droids to every corner of the galaxy to find the Rebels' new base. He finally located them on the ice planet Hoth.





Although Darth Vader won the Battle of Hoth, he was not able to destroy the Rebels' best ship, the Millenium Falcon.

The Sith Lord traveled to Hoth with the Imperial fleet and launched a deadly attack. The Rebels had to evacuate very quickly and their forces were scattered far and wide across the galaxy.



Luke Skywalker

After having a vision in which his friends were in danger, Luke Skywalker flew to Cloud City, near the gas planet Bespin. He was now more powerful thanks to the teachings of Jedi Master Yoda.



Cloud City

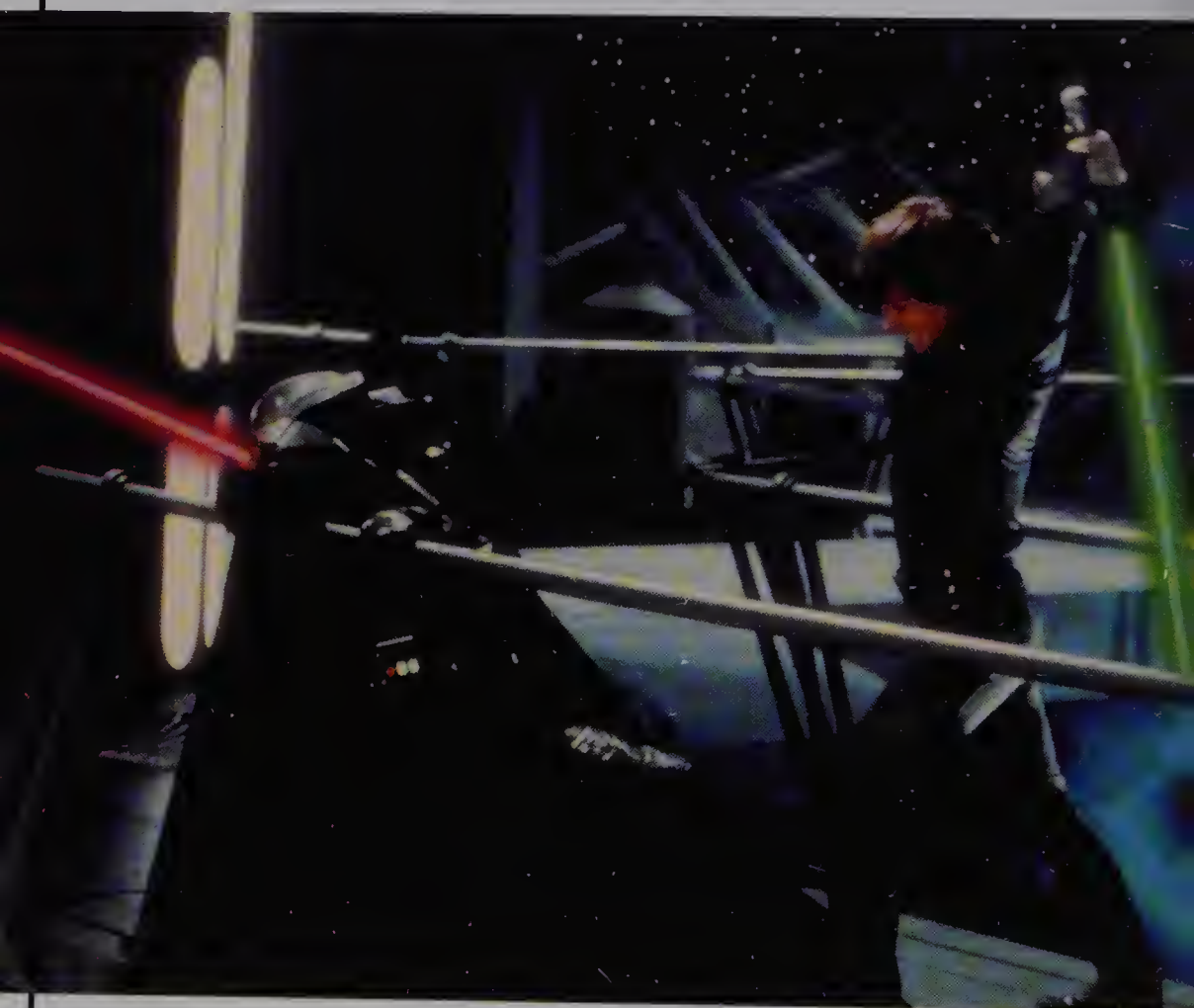
Emperor Palpatine had finally told Darth Vader the truth about Luke Skywalker. As Darth Vader laid a trap for Luke on Cloud City, he was looking for more than just a troublesome Rebel—he was searching for his son.



As Luke and Vader fought with lightsabers, Luke still had no idea who lay behind Darth Vader's mask. The fight ended when Vader chopped off Luke's hand. He revealed that he was Luke's father and asked his son to join him and rule the galaxy. Despite his painful wound, Luke was strong with the Force. He refused to turn to the dark side.

Vader's Choice

For many years, Darth Vader had been loyal to Emperor Palpatine. However, meeting his son Luke—a good and true person—seemed to change him. Could it be that some part of Anakin Skywalker remained behind Vader's mask?

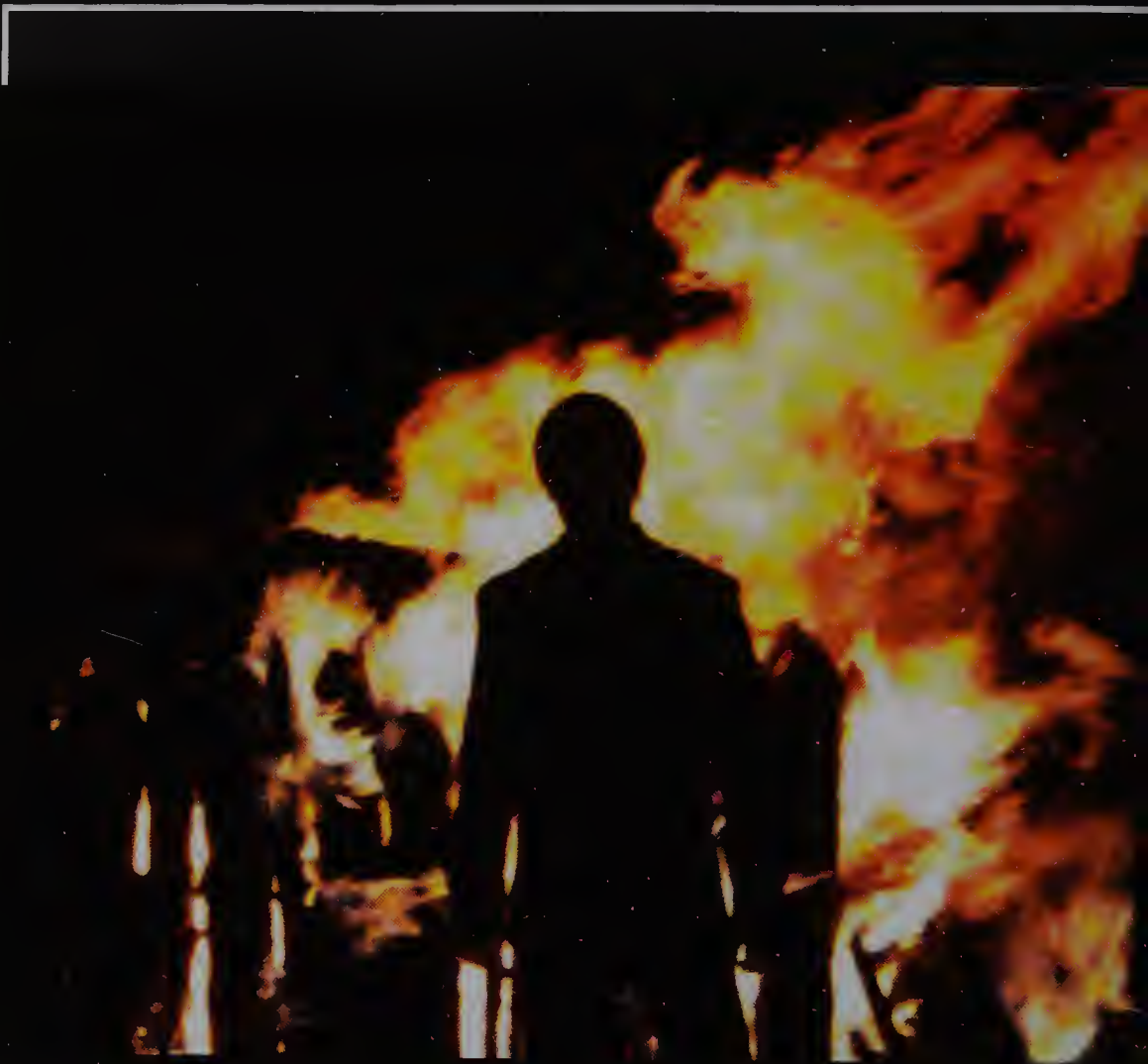


Palpatine had predicted that Luke would come to them and he would be turned to the dark side. When Luke surrendered, it seemed that Palpatine would be proved right. As father and son fought once more, Luke felt anger and hatred and drew close to the dark side. At the last moment Luke was able to control his feelings and refused to join the dark side. As an enraged Palpatine attacked Luke, Anakin Skywalker finally returned from the dark side to save his son.

Death of an Emperor

As Palpatine tortured Luke with deadly Force lightning, Darth Vader could not bear to watch. He picked up his Master and threw him down a bottomless reactor shaft. The Emperor was dead!





The Death of Darth Vader

At the vital moment, Darth Vader returned from his nightmare. Luke had reminded him that he was once a great Jedi named Anakin Skywalker. However, as Vader saved his son, he was fatally wounded by the Emperor.

As Anakin lay dying, he asked Luke to remove his helmet so that he could look at his son's face with his own eyes. When Anakin died, his body disappeared into the light side of the Force. Luke was sad that his father was dead but proud of him too. The light side of the Force had overcome the dark side and Anakin Skywalker had returned.

On the forest moon of Endor, Luke burned Vader's armor. All around the galaxy, everyone celebrated the end of Palpatine and his evil Empire.

Jedi Restored

After his death, Anakin took his place with the other great Jedi heroes Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi.



Glossary

Apprentice

A person who is learning a skill.

Dark side

The part of the Force associated with fear and hatred.

Droid

A kind of robot.

Emperor

The leader of an Empire is called an Emperor. Palpatine is the Emperor who rules the Galactic Empire.

Empire

A group of nations ruled over by one leader, who is called an Emperor.

The Force

An energy field created by all living things.

Force lightning

One of the Sith's powers which involves firing deadly electricity from their fingers.

Galaxy

A group of millions of stars and planets.

Jedi Council

The governing body

of the Jedi order.

The wisest Jedi, such as Yoda, sit on the Council.

Jedi Knight

A *Star Wars* warrior with special powers who defends the good of the galaxy. Anakin Skywalker, Luke Skywalker, and Ob-Wan Kenobi are all Jedi Knights.

Jedi Master

The most experienced Jedi of all.

Jedi Order

The name of a group that defends peace and justice in the galaxy.

Jedi Temple

The Jedi headquarters where the Jedi Council meets and Jedi live, train, and work.

Lightsaber

A Jedi's and Sith's weapon, made of glowing energy.

Light side

The part of the Force associated with goodness, compassion, and healing.

Missions

Special tasks or duties.

Padawan Learner

A Jedi who is learning the ways of the Force.

Rebel

Someone who opposes whoever is in power.

Republic

A nation or group of nations in which the people vote for their leaders.

Senate

The governing body of the Republic.

Senator

A member of the Senate. He or she will have been chosen (elected) by the people of his or her country.

Sith

Enemies of the Jedi who use the dark side of the Force.

Slave

A person who is owned by another person.

Starfighter

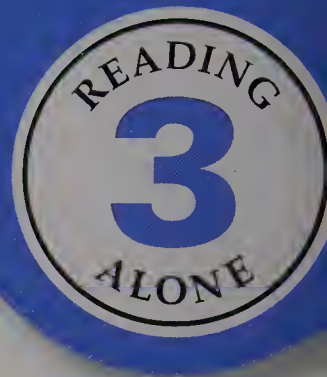
A small, fast spaceship used by Jedi and others.

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